

Forum: General Assembly 3

Issue: Measure to prevent and combat non-transmissible diseases

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Introduction

Non-transmissible diseases also known as non-communicable diseases (NCD) kills around 35 million people around the world each year. This is around 60% of all deaths each year. 80% of such diseases occur in low and middle income countries. A majority of diseases falling into the category of non-transmissible diseases include cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes, obesity and chronic respiratory diseases. Most of such diseases occur due to factors such as tobacco use, alcohol abuse, physical inactivity and not eating healthily. More than nine million deaths caused by non-transmissible diseases kill before the person reaches the age of 60. The World health organization (WHO) says globally the number of deaths related to non-transmissible diseases will rise by about 17% in the following 10 years. They also predict that the death toll will rise by 27% in African regions and 25% in Mediterranean regions. But they also say the highest total number of deaths will occur in the Western Pacific and Southeast Asian region ("Non-communicable Diseases").

Key Terms Defined

Non-transmissible /non-communicable diseases (NCD)- "A non-communicable disease is a term used to refer to diseases that are not contagious" ("Non-communicable Disease." *Biology-Online.org*). Any disease that occurs without something infecting the host can be called a non-transmissible or non-communicable disease. The main diseases under this category include, cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity and chronic respiratory diseases.

Cancer- Generally cancer can mean the spreading of a large number of diseases to parts of your body. It can also be the growth of tumors or neoplasms. "One defining feature of cancer is the rapid creation of abnormal cells that grow beyond their usual boundaries, and which can then invade adjoining parts of the body and spread to other organs. This process is referred to as metastasis. Metastases are the major cause of death from cancer." ("World Cancer Day 2013).

Cardiovascular disease- This refers to problems and diseases that occur in the heart or blood vessels. Many of the problems that occur are caused by the build of plaque in the arteries which make them smaller making it very difficult for the blood to flow from the heart

to the organs. If blood flow stops altogether then clots can happen leading to heart attacks and strokes. Other types of cardiovascular disease include heart failure, arrhythmia and heart valve problems. ("What Is Cardiovascular Disease (Heart Disease)?").

Chronic respiratory disease- "Chronic respiratory diseases are chronic diseases of the airways and other structures of the lung. Some of the most common are: asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, occupational lung diseases and pulmonary hypertension." Chronic meaning recurring continuously for a long period of time. ("World Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Day").

Diabetes- Glucose comes from food and is used to create energy for your body to function. If you have too much of this glucose in your body, you have diabetes. There are a three types of diabetes, type 1, type 2 and gestational diabetes.

Type 1: The immune system has destroyed the beta cells in the pancreas and your body is in turn deprived of insulin. Insulin controls the amount of glucose in your body. This type of diabetes is usually diagnosed in children, teenagers and young adults.

Type 2: This type begins when your body no longer uses insulin properly. Your pancreas attempts to compensate by created and added amount of insulin but over time, the pancreas can't keep up with demand after meals. This type can occur in any age category.

Gestational: "Some women develop gestational diabetes during the late stages of pregnancy. Gestational diabetes is caused by the hormones of pregnancy or a shortage of insulin. Although this form of diabetes usually goes away after the baby is born, a woman who has had it and her child are more likely to develop diabetes later in life" ("Diabetes")

Obesity- "Overweight and obesity are defined as abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that may impair health." ("Obesity and Overweight.")

General overview of the topic

In the twelfth century high income and industrialized countries began enhancing medicine against communicable diseases. This decreased child mortality rates while the life expectancy of citizens in such countries increased. Half way through the twelfth century, non-transmissible diseases came to claim lives of many and was declared a huge threat to health. Such diseases did not begin to appear in low and middle income countries till the end of the twelfth century. In countries that were developing and growing economically such as Malaysia and Korea, the transition between communicable and non-communicable diseases was quick. They looked at the history of public health in high income countries, applying this to their own successfully. At the moment, although many countries have similar health profiles to high income countries, the transition from transmissible to non-transmissible

diseases is different in each country.

Non-transmissible diseases affect low and middle-income countries the most. WHO projects that by 2020 the Africa will have the highest increase in deaths due to non-transmissible diseases. It is believed that the disease usually occur in the older ages when infact it does not differentiate between age groups. Although more than 9 million people die from such diseases before the age of 60. The diseases are caused by bad choices in life style. About 6 million people die every year because of tobacco use causing NCDs . This number is estimated to rise to 8 millllion by the year 2030. NCDs caused by physical inactivity accounts for 3.2 million deaths per year while lack of fruit and vegetable intake account for 1.7 million deaths per year. Finally alcohol abuse claims the lives of 2.3 million people each year because they get NCDs. Such a lifestyle causes increased blood pressure, obesity/overweight, hyperglycemia (high blood glucose levels) and hyperlipidemia (high levels of fat in the blood). These all increase the risk of a person getting NCDs. The NCDs threaten to be a great obstacle in achieving the millenium goal to eradicate poverty. Low-income families do not have access to much health care and may not be able to treat themselves when they get an NCD. They are still exposed t harmful chemicals in the air and may have a healthy diet. Therefore this problem is one to be eradicated sooner rather than later.

Major parties involved and their views

WHO (World health organization)

The World Health Organization is an agency under the United nations (UN) that coordinates and addresses issues concerning public health issues such as non-transmissible diseases. With non-transmissible diseases killing nearly 35 million people each year, The World health organization looks at non-transmissible diseases as a large threat to the human population. In 2008 it came out with a [five year plan](#) to reduce mortality rate due to non-transmissible diseases. The plan contains initiatives for healthy diet, physical activity that was endorsed by the Health assembly in 2004. In 2010 the UN General assembly passed a resolution calling for all member states to address and participate in the preventing and treating non-transmissible diseases. The UN then hosted a high level meeting on the issue of non-transmissible diseases in New York in 2011 on a global strategy to combat the 4 most prominent non-transmissible diseases (cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, cardiovascular diseases and diabetes).

NCD Alliance (Non-communicable diseases Alliance)

The NCD alliance was founded by four international NGO federations representing the four most prominent non-transmissible diseases. It was launched in May 2009. Working along with other NGO partners they are present in over 170 different countries working to make this issue the center of government policies. Their main goal is to show people that NCDs are a cause for poverty and pose as a great obstacle to economic development. Uniting over 2000 organizations in our network, they try to force governments to see that non-transmissible diseases are a problem needed to be addressed immediately. Their main focus is to make governments integrate initiatives for NCDs into the achieving the millenium goals.

NCD Network

The NCD network is an arrangement consisting of “United Nations agencies, intergovernmental organizations, academia, research centres, non governmental organizations, and the business community” (NCDnet - Global Noncommunicable Disease Network). It works on objective 5 of the 5 year action plan for preventing non-transmissible diseases which states “To promote partnerships for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases” (2008-2013 Action Plan for the Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases). They work to help and support low or middle-income countries by working and coordinating with donors, philanthropic foundations, United Nations agencies, intergovernmental organizations, international nongovernmental organizations, media, and the private sector. The NCD network is a group under the World Health Organization that specifically focus on collaboration in order to prevent NCDs. Along with collaboration comes the exchanging of new techniques and of information on how best to tackle certain NCDs. For example in October 2009, they had their first NCDnet planning meeting where they spoke about the progress WHO has made towards tackling NCDs and to make clear strategies and action plans for the future. They have had a similar meeting in 2010 in Geneva once more discussing how to achieve the action plan for NCDs by 2013.

WHO FCTC

The WHO framework convention on tobacco control is a treaty adopted by the World health Assembly on the 21st of May 2003 and was put into action on the 27th of February 2005. This convention was made due to the globalization of tobacco plantation and consumption. It states the right of the people to the highest standard of health care. They regulate tobacco consumption by implementing smoking laws globally. currently 16% of the world’s population is protected by national

non-smoking laws. Since tobacco use is one of the main reasons for non-transmissible diseases this is an important step in the prevention of non-transmissible diseases. There are 175 states that are parties to this treaty and 168 that are signatories. WHO had been discussing with organizations of a convention framework for tobacco control and finally an intergovernmental negotiating body is established in 2000. By 2003 they had had 6 meetings discussing their progress and setting future protocols for NCDs related to tobacco abuse. During 2003 they had opened themselves for signatures to both WHO headquarters and UN headquarters and had their first open-ended intergovernmental working group in 2004. In 2006 they had 4 meetings discussing protocol on cross-border tobacco advertising and the illicit trading of tobacco to prevent people being introduced to and addicted to tobacco. In 2007 they also discussed guidelines of protection of people from exposure to tobacco smoke in order for those who aren't using tobacco to stay out of harm's way as second hand smoking is just as dangerous as inhaling the smoke directly. They have had many meetings such as these also talking about the packaging in order to warn people of the harms that can occur when inhaling tobacco.

World Heart Federation

The World Heart Federation focuses on the global fight towards cardiovascular diseases using united organizations consisting of 200 member organizations. Cardiovascular disease is one of the main NCD diseases. The World Heart Federation are working to reduce mortality due to cardiovascular diseases by 25% by the year 2025. Their main goal is to bring this problem globally to a political level. Making it a priority for governments to address. Following objective five of the global action plan, it believes the best way to tackle the issue is with global coordination of information. The world heart federation share and exchange ideas to further enhance the knowledge about cardiovascular diseases thereby getting closer to preventing the issue. They want to educate the public so they create days such as Go Red for Women day that raises awareness for the women who die of cardiovascular diseases attempting to educate and make people care about the topic and possibly donate. On 29th of September 2013 the world heart federation and the rest of the world will be celebrating world heart day. The world heart federation will be having campaigns and programs in order to educate women and children mainly how to protect themselves from cardiovascular related NCDs. Furthermore they provide mentors, managers and teachers with a toolkit outlining plans and evaluations on how to educate the people they are in charge of about preventing cardiovascular diseases.

International Diabetes Federation (IDF)

The IDF works to unite over 200 diabetes associations in 160 different countries. They work to communicate between associations in the attempt to exchange information between all these associations to better enhance their knowledge about diabetes and how to fight it. Furthermore they want to raise awareness of the disease to the people with diabetes and their caregivers on what diabetes is and how to tackle it. In December 2006 they led the United Nations to secure a resolution implementing a world diabetes day to raise awareness on the disease. They have activities at a community level as well as a global scale. Most of their activities aim to bring diabetes to the attention of governments and make it a political priority. They also encourage the exchanging of information between regions and to educate the public in their specific regions. They have seven regions, "Africa (AFR), Europe (EUR), Middle East and North Africa (MENA), North America and Caribbean (NAC), South and Central America (SACA), South East Asia (SEA) and Western Pacific (WP)" ("Who We Are"). During the 66th World Health Assembly, the IDF introduced the global diabetes scorecard to measure how each government commits themselves to the issue of diabetes. This is due to the fact that although countries committed themselves to the cause during the UN summit for NCDs in 2011, they failed to meet their pledges. This way the IDF are able to keep tabs on government's progress and hold them accountable for it within their individual nations. When such pledges are fulfilled, noticeable changes will be implemented within such countries.

Union of International Cancer Control (UICC)

The UICC is an organization founded in 1933 that brings together 760 organizations in 155 countries that are fighting cancer, ministries of health, research institutes and patient groups. Together with these organizations and WHO they are bringing the fight against cancer to a global scale. The member organizations govern the union and they all meet every two years. The general assembly picks 17 directors to act as the executive body of the organization during the period of two years between each meeting. They have several campaigns such as the Global Education and Training initiative (GETI). This program helps to train medical staff in the field on the prevention and procedure of cancer patients. With more medically knowledgeable people around the world, the problem of cancer could potentially be avoided. This is a major step forward as many places in sub-Saharan Africa lack health care workforce and thereby lower their health care quality by a significant amount.

The International Union against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease

The union's goal is to give healthcare to those suffering of tuberculosis (TB) and lung disease especially in low or middle-income countries. They have 3000 organizations and individuals working towards the same goal. They focus on tuberculosis, lung and non-transmissible diseases, tobacco control and research towards tackling such diseases. They are famous for when they led a global strategy to find a cure and to control tuberculosis . With the success of their TB strategy, they have developed similar programs to tackle HIV, asthma, tobacco control and other similar problems. In 2010 the union held a year long campaign to raise awareness on the dangers of lung diseases and the fact that it kills nearly 10 million people per year. They have also created the Asthama Drug Facility in order to offer people in low or middle-income countries to have access to affordable yet quality assured inhalers for asthama.

Timeline of Events

May 20th 2000- The World Health Organization passes WHA 53.17 calling for collaboration, prevention and capacity building in order to control and prevent non-communicable diseases

April 13th 2002- The Salt Institute attempts to undermine WHO/FAO's report on Diet, Nutrition and prevention of Chronic Diseases. This report stated the need of reduction of salt to reduce risk of hypertension and to limit sugar in the hopes of avoiding diabetes.

May 18th 2002- WHO passes WHA 55.23 saying WHO will develop a global strategy on Diet, Nutrition, Physical activity and Health.

May 21st 2003- WHO's Framework Convention of Tobacco Control is approved.

2004- WHO's global strategy on Diet, Nutrition, Physical activity and Health is approved by the WHO executive Board.

April 18th 2005- WHA58.22 passes and it calls for improved access to diagnostics and treatments of all cancer to prevent cancer.

May 13th 2008 - CEOs of Major food companies pledge to take steps to address the problem of NCD creating a food and beverage alliance.

May 28th 2008 - WHO's global strategy action plan to prevent non-communicable

diseases is released, endorsed by health ministers and is approved by the world health assembly in 2009.

May 19th 2009 - Creation of the NCD Alliance is announced.

2011 - UN high level summit on NCDs is held.

UN involvement and Relevant Resolutions

10th May 2010 (UN Resolution (64/265)) - This resolution emphasizes the need for coordination of responses on a national, regional and global scale in order to best tackle the problem of NCDs.

19th October 2010 UN Resolution (65/1) - The resolution reminds all the world leader their commitment to the Millenium Development goals. It states the obstacle that NCDs pose to achieving the goals by 2015 and how communication nationally, regionally and globally was the key to tackling NCDs.

Possible Solutions

Organizations working along side the governments organize activities and/or other schemes to encourage a healthy lifestyle with good nutrition, physical activity and to promote a life without tobacco or alcohol.

Governments should allocate a specific day for certain non-transmissible diseases such as the diabetes awareness day in order to educate the public on the cause and effect of the diseases in order to prevent people from getting such diseases or helping people with these diseases understand their disease to better take care of themselves.

Hold a conference every two years for each major non-transmissible disease between organizations from all over the world working, on their specific disease to share their information about the disease, to better tackle it.

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